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REVOLUTION AND REVOLUTION

BY
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THE CROWS AND THE OWLS

ONCE upon a time the birds all met together to elect a King. At first they said that the owl was the best bird among them, and they made up their minds to crown him King. But a crow laughed at them and said

‘How foolish you are! Are there not better among you than the owl? He is ugly, he has round eyes, he is unkind, he is a bird of ill omen. He cannot see in the day, and he is awake at night, when all the other birds are asleep. He is not to be trusted. Choose another King, one who is strong and good, and whose power will be lasting.’

The birds listened to the crow, and drove the owl away. And from that moment the owls and the crows became bitter enemies.

Some time later there was a whole host of crows living in a shady banyan tree. Their King was called Teghavarna. His enemy was Avamanda, the King of the owls. One night, while the crows were sleeping, the owls attacked them, and killed many of them.

Next day the King of the crows talked sadly with his ministers. They had already lost many of their number. The owls would certainly attack them

with a larger force, and the crows would all be killed. What was to be done? Some plan must be found at all costs. The King's ministers were asked for their advice. One begged the King to go away with his subjects to another country; another thought they should wait and see what would happen; a third wanted to go to meet the enemy and attack them at once. One minister advised making a truce for a time. Later on, when the chance came, they could make an attack upon the owls. But how was the truce to be made? Who would take a message to the owls? —

A wise old crow named Chiranjivin was the last to speak. He said that they must be very cunning in dealing with the owls, or they would soon make an end of the crows. The enemy were too strong to be beaten by direct means.

The King agreed with his old minister, and begged him to suggest a plan. After long thought Chiranjivin said to the other crows:

'Pull out some of my feathers, and leave me under the banyan tree, as if I had been badly beaten. Then go far away, and watch what will happen.'

They obeyed him and left him lying under the tree. That night the owl-king came with a large army to attack the crows; but they had all gone, and the tree was empty. At last he heard a feeble caw from below. He came down to see what it was, and found Chiranjivin, who seemed to be in great pain and distress.

‘ I am Chiranjivin’, he moaned, ‘ the minister of the crow-king. He and his other ministers wished to attack you ; but I advised him to make friends with you instead, for you were too strong to be defeated. Then he was angry with me, and ordered me to be beaten. He threw me down here, and went away with all his people.’

The owl-king asked his ministers what he should do. One was in favour of sparing Chiranjivin. Though he was an enemy, he might yet become a friend. Even a thief was sometimes useful. Another owl agreed, for he said that the crow knew the secrets of the enemy, and would reveal them to the owls. Another owl thought that Chiranjivin should be spared, because he had asked them for shelter. Even an enemy should not be refused help if he was wounded. But there was one minister, called Raktaksha, who advised them to kill Chiranjivin. He said that he was a natural enemy of the owls, and they could not trust him. Enemies often used flattery to gain their ends. Perhaps Chiranjivin was only trying to mislead them by craft and cunning.

The owl-king agreed with his first adviser. What could Chiranjivin do to them? He was alone and helpless, and had been badly treated because he had taken their side. How then could they kill him in cold blood? ✓

When Chiranjivin heard this, he pretended all the more, and began to weep.

‘What is the use of life to me now?’ he cried. ‘It is better that I should die. Bring firewood, make a funeral pyre and set fire to it, and I will mount upon it and die. I shall only beg the fire-god to grant me the boon of being born again as an owl. Then I will take my revenge on the crows.’

Raktaksha laughed and said : ‘You have no need to kill yourself. My master has made up his mind to spare you. You could never be born an owl. You have a crow’s nature, and a crow you will always be.’

So Chiranjivin was taken to the cave of the owls, where he was well fed and kindly treated. He soon became as glossy and handsome as before. Then one day he told the owl-king that he would go to the crows and do his best to lead them into a trap.

‘I must make you some return for your favour to me,’ he said. ‘I will tell the crow-king that you are now his friend, and that he can safely return to his banyan tree. Then you can attack him in the night, and kill him and his people. In the meanwhile, stuff all the holes in the cave where you live with dry grass and leaves, so that no one can tell where they are. Shut yourselves in there until I return. Then they will not attack you by day, and you will be safe from them.’

The owls did as he advised, and Chiranjivin went back to his own people. He called all the crows together, and made them each carry a piece of



THE CROWS DROPPED THEIR WOOD IN THE DRY GRASS

wood. He himself carried a lighted torch. The crows dropped their wood in the dry grass and leaves in front of the cave of the owls. Chiranjivin set fire to it, and in a moment everything was in flames. The owls of course could not see by day and, taken by surprise, did not know how to escape. So they were all burnt to death in their cave. The crows returned to their old tree and lived there in peace and plenty. Chiranjivin said to the King :

‘The owl-king had one good minister ; but he would not listen to him, and my life was spared. I flattered him, and he listened to me because he was a fool. I pretended to be his friend, and he believed me. He ought to have known that if I would betray my own people I should not be likely to be faithful to others. A King should always listen to wise people, who are skilled in reading the minds of others. Then only will the goddess of Fortune be pleased with him, and give him her favour. And he will reign in prosperity and peace.’

So the crow-king honoured Chiranjivin, and made him his chief adviser.

THE LION AND THE BULL

A RICH merchant was once travelling through a forest on the banks of the Jumna. One of the bulls drawing his carriage slipped on a muddy path and fell. He hurt his legs badly and could not use them for a time. After vain attempts to make the bull stand up, the merchant left him there and went on his way. It was not long before the bull recovered. His wounds began to heal, and he was soon able to move about. He ate the tender, sweet grass of the forest, and soon became fat and sleek, since he had no work to do. He wandered about where he liked, and filled the jungle with his bellows, which in the silence sounded strangely deep and loud. The bull's name was Sanjivaka.

In the forest lived a lion called Pingalaka, who, by his courage and strength, had become King of the jungle world. Two jackals, one called Damanaka, and the other Karataka were his ministers. Like most of the other animals in the forest, the lion went to the Jumna to drink water. One day he heard the voice of Sanjivaka not far away and was terrified by it, as he had never heard it before. He thought that a new and fierce animal, who was greater than himself, had come to live in the forest. He slunk back into the forest without taking his usual drink of water, and hid himself in his den. He said that he was ill, so that his subjects should not think that

he was afraid. But his ministers, who could see that there was nothing the matter with him, wondered why he would not leave his den. They asked each other if it would be wise to speak to their noble master.

‘It is not safe to meddle in what is not our business,’ said Karataka. ‘I knew a monkey who died through his curiosity. Some workmen had been sawing through a huge plank of timber and had worked through the upper half of it when it was time to go home. Before they went away they put a wedge in between the two parts of the plank. The monkey came to see what they had been doing. He was too curious to leave things alone, so he sat in the gap between the two sawn portions and pulled out the wedge. You can guess the rest.’

‘The two parts of the plank sprang together and crushed him,’ said Damanaka. ‘And it served him right, I say. But we are not so silly. Besides, wise ministers should always try to know what is in their master’s mind. They may gain a great deal by doing so.’

‘A good servant should not always think of his own advantage,’ said Karataka.

‘But that is the way of the world,’ the other jackal answered. ‘Everyone looks for a reward; what that reward is, depends on what the person is. A dog is pleased with a bone, while the lion may desire an elephant.’

‘True, true, but if we anger our noble master, what will happen? He will kill us.’

‘Not if we are careful and wise in handling him. We must try to read his mind and make him trust us. Leave it to me.’

So Damanaka went to the King. He was received kindly, and began to speak in a very respectful manner.

‘A master,’ said the jackal, ‘should seek for useful servants and cherish them. He should destroy all others who intend to do him harm; but if he wishes to prosper in the world, he must trust his good servants and be ready to take their advice. You know I have always been faithful and useful to you. Do not be angry, with me then, if I ask you a question. Why is it that you have not left your den for so long a time? If your illness is indeed so grave, ought we not to take steps to cure it?’

The lion was very pleased with his minister’s tactful speech and told him everything. Someone greater than himself had come to the forest, he said. It was time for him to leave those regions and go somewhere else. But the jackal begged him not to be in a hurry.

‘You are a King,’ he said, ‘and you are famous for your courage. You must not leave the wood for so small a cause. How do we know what animal it was that raised the bellow you heard? Little creatures often make very loud noises.’

‘Do you not know, my lord, the story of the jackal who was frightened by the noise of a drum? At last he was brave enough to go up to the object and look at it; then he found it nothing but wood and parchment. Let me go and see what I can find out for your majesty?’

The permission was given, and Damanaka went off into the forest. Before long he found the bull. He went up to him very carefully, but he soon saw that he was quite a harmless animal. Nay, more, he learnt that the bull was really afraid of the lion. Damanaka said that he would speak to the lion on behalf of the bull. He went back and told the lion the true facts of the case and obtained from him a promise not to harm the bull. And, since even the promises of beasts are sacred, the bull went without fear to see the lion. In the end the two became such great friends, that the lion took no notice of his jackal ministers and always asked the advice of the bull.

Then Damanaka felt very jealous of the bull and told Karataka that he would take steps to get their rival killed. Karataka begged him to be careful not to offend their master. Damanaka replied :

‘I shall certainly take the greatest care. Have you not heard the story of the crane who lost his life through his folly? He wanted to eat the fish in a deep tank, but he could not reach them. So he told the fish that a man was coming there soon to catch them in a net, and they could escape death only with

his aid. He would take them in his beak and leave them safely in a clear lake far away. The foolish fish consented, and the crane started to take them one by one to a rock near by, where he ate them all. Then a tortoise also asked to be taken away. The crane was delighted and flew away with him, but, as they drew near the rock, the tortoise looked down and saw the bones of the poor fish the crane had eaten. He guessed what his own fate would be if he did not act promptly, and as soon as the crane placed him on the rock he turned round and bit off the bird's head. Thus the crane lost his life because he had not the wisdom to see the difference between the tortoise and the fish. But I am not like that. I shall be very careful indeed.

Damanaka went to the lion and pretended to be very sad. When asked the reason of his grief, he confessed that he was thinking only of his royal master, who was in danger from the bull he took to be his friend. He said that Sanjivaka was doing his best to persuade the animals of the forest to be false to their King and murder him.

'Pah' said the lion, 'What can that grass-eating animal do to me, who am an eater of flesh?'

'O King,' answered the jackal, 'It is wise not to be too sure. A King who neglects a good servant like me, and honours a bad servant like the bull, is in great peril, and the goddess of fortune will no longer be his friend. Why do you love the bull so

much? He is not worthy of you, and he will soon pull you down to his level if you are not careful. Noble people should choose their friends only among noble people. Beware of the bull, O King. When he is ready, he will certainly turn upon you.'

Then the cunning little jackal went to the bull and told him much the same stories of the treachery of the lion. He told him that the King of beasts had listened to tales against him and had made up his mind to kill him. The bull felt very grieved that his friend should so soon have forgotten his faithful service and been led astray by evil advice. The jackal agreed with him, but told him to be warned and be always prepared against the lion's attack.

'One day you will see him swing his tail and prepare to spring on you,' he said. 'So you must toss your head at him and be ready with your sharp-pointed horns.'

Then the two friends were made to distrust each other, and it was not long before they came face to face. Each thought that the other was ready to attack him, and so in self-defence they rushed at each other and began to fight. Karataka feared for his master's safety, but Damanaka laughed aloud in great glee. What, indeed, was there to fear? How could a mere bull conquer a lion who had been the victor in many fights with terrible animals?

And so, indeed, it proved. The lion killed the poor bull, and Damanaka once more became the King's favourite.

THE FOUR FRIENDS

THERE was once a great Salmali tree which grew in a big forest. A crow named Laghupatin lived in its branches. One day a hunter spread a net under the tree. On the net he scattered grain and rice, and then he hid himself, with a stick in his hand. After a while, a big flock of pigeons came and alighted on the ground. They saw the rice, and began to eat. Then the hunter pulled the string and the birds were all caught in the net. But the King of the pigeons was very wise. He told the birds to take the meshes of the net in their beaks and fly up together as fast as they could. They did this, and the net rose with them into the air ; and so they escaped from the fowler.

The crow saw all that happened, and followed the pigeons as they flew through the air in the net. He saw the birds alighting on the ground in a lonely spot, and then he heard the pigeon-king call out to a mouse named Hiranya. The two seemed to be friends, for Hiranya began to gnaw at the meshes of the net, and soon freed the birds, which flew away happily.

Then the crow went to the mouse, Hiranya, and asked him to be his comrade. 'Anyone,' he said, 'would be glad to have such a good and helpful

friend as you.' But the mouse was afraid, because the crow was his natural enemy. So the crow said :

If I eat you, you will only make me a very small meal, and I shall soon be hungry again. But if I become friends with you, you will always help me to escape from my enemies.' So he swore an oath of friendship, and the mouse believed him and came out and gave him food, and they lived together on very good terms.

One day, the crow told the mouse that he could no longer find food in that part of the country. Besides he was always afraid of the fowler. There was a forest far away, with a river running through it, in which lived a tortoise called Mantharaka, who was a great friend of his. He had decided to go and live there. The mouse begged the crow to take him to the tortoise also, as he too was not happy in his own country. So the crow carried the mouse off in his beak, and they went to the tortoise. The crow told him all about the mouse, and the tortoise also adopted him as his friend. Then as the three friends sat together, the tortoise asked the mouse why he had left his own country. The mouse told the following story :

' My house was in a big hole near the city, and one night I stole a necklace of jewels, and hid it. This necklace had the magic power of giving strength to others. I became strong by merely looking at it, and so I was able to steal plenty of

food. Many mice looked upon me as a very great person, and put themselves under my care. In the meanwhile, a hermit came to live in a cave near my hole. He begged his living every day and got together a great deal of food. After eating what he needed he kept the rest in his beggar's bowl, and every night I stole the food and carried it off. One night, another hermit came to the cave, and both sat talking together for a long time. The first hermit knew that I would come for his food, and kept hitting the bowl with a stick to drive me away. The other man asked him why he made such a noise. The first hermit told him the reason. So the other man said to him, 'That is always the case with these creatures. They become too greedy and they die. I remember a story of a hunter who went to a forest and laid a snare with a bow which would go off by itself. When any animal came into the snare, and moved the food which was placed there, the string of the bow would be pulled, and an arrow would be driven into the animal. The hunter had just finished fixing the trap when he saw a wild boar and chased it. He pierced the boar with an arrow, which killed it, but before it died it wounded the hunter badly, and he too lost his life. A fox saw all this and came near. As he was very greedy, he wished to store up the bodies of the hunter and the wild boar for later use. In the meantime he saw the trap and pulled at the bait. The bow let off the arrow, and the fox was

killed. So you see how fatal their greed is to these creatures. This mouse will come to the same end.'

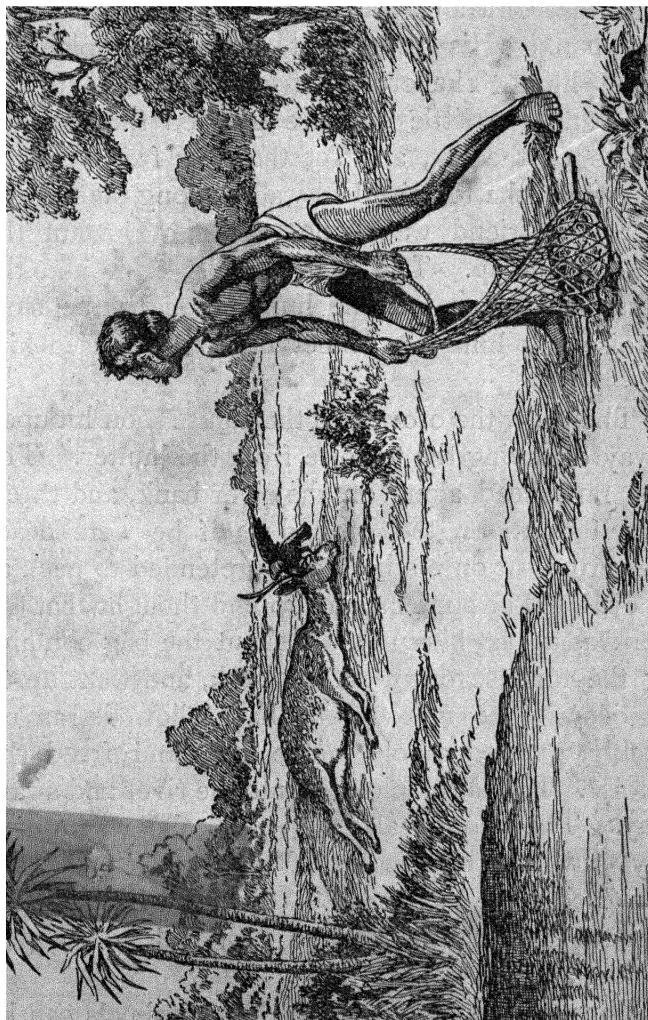
'So saying, he took a spade and began to dig up my hole. He came to the very end of it and found the necklace. The friends took it away with them into their cave and went to sleep. I went up there again to steal some food and the first hermit saw me and hit me with a stick. The blow injured me. I crept back to my hole, but I soon lost all my strength, and could not steal much food. So all my subjects left me, as bees leave trees that have lost their flowers, and fish leave a tank when the water is failing. And that was why I wished to leave my own country and come here.'

Then the crow and tortoise comforted the mouse and told him not to lose heart.

'A good person,' they said, 'is at home in all countries. He can make his home in any place. He who is content with what he has, is never unhappy. One who can control his feelings never has any trouble or fear; while he who is bold and daring will find nothing impossible.'

At that very moment a deer came running to them. His name was Chitranga, and he was being chased by hunters. The three friends helped him to hide, and afterwards they fed him, and looked after him, and they all four lived together in great comfort.

One day the deer was nowhere to be found.



THE CROW PRETENDED TO PECK AT HIS EYES

Flying to the top of a tree to look for him, the crow found that Chitranga had been caught in a net on the river bank. His friends at once made plans to rescue him. The crow carried the mouse to the bank, and the little creature gnawed through the meshes of the net, and set the deer free. In the meanwhile, the tortoise had waded along the river to where his friend was lying. At that instant the hunter came up. The deer and the crow and the mouse ran away, but the hunter caught the slow tortoise, put him into a net bag, and carried him off.

The deer, the crow, and the mouse soon hit upon a way of saving the tortoise from the hunter. The deer ran ahead along on the river bank, and threw himself down on the ground as if he were dead. The crow sat on his head and pretended to peck at his eyes. The hunter came up and thought that the deer was at last his prey. He put the bag containing the tortoise down on the bank, and went up to the deer. The mouse, who had followed, ran up quickly, gnawed a hole in the net, and freed the tortoise. The latter plunged into the river and swam away. The mouse also ran back home. When they saw the tortoise was free, the deer and the crow also made their escape. The four friends were soon together again and lived for a long time in comfort and safety.

Thus we see that even the lower animals can be

brave and faithful to each other. They love their friends, and will do their best to get them out of trouble. They will even risk their lives for them. In this way, they can teach a lesson to many human beings, who often desert their friends in trouble and think only of themselves.

THE MOUSE-MAIDEN

A HERMIT once saw a cat chasing a mouse. The little creature ran as fast as it could, and turned and twisted very cleverly for a long time, to escape the cat's claws ; but at last all its strength had gone. It ran up to the hermit and stopped at his feet as if it were asking him to save it from death. The hermit took pity on the mouse, and before the cat could seize it he used his magic powers and turned the mouse into a young girl. For many years the mouse-maiden lived with him as his daughter.

At last the time came when the mouse-maiden was old enough to marry, and the hermit began to look round to find her a husband. She was tall and beautiful, and the hermit was very proud of her ; so he thought that her husband ought to be someone very great and powerful. He spoke to the Sun and said, ' I am seeking a husband for this maiden. He must be strong and great—and who is greater and stronger than the Sun ? '

The Sun replied, ' There is one who has more power than I, for he can cover my face when he wishes and make me cease to shine upon the earth. It is the Cloud ? '

Then the hermit spoke to the Cloud as he had spoken to the Sun, but the Cloud replied.

There is one whose strength is greater than mine, for he bears me along upon his breath, and I can go only where he wishes. It is the Wind !'

Then the hermit called to the Wind, as it drove the Cloud away, and spoke as before. And the Wind's loud voice fell to a humble whisper as it answered, 'I am strong indeed, but there is one who can defy my power. Nothing I can do can move him from where he stands. It is the Mountain !'

The hermit went to the loftiest Mountain of the Himalayas and repeated his message. The Mountain said, 'The Wind cannot shake me, yet there is one whom I fear. He is small, but he is patient, and his teeth and claws are strong. He makes his holes in me where he pleases, and digs so deep that in time he can make my rocks come crashing down. It is the Mouse !'

The hermit found the Mouse, who said that he would be very glad to have the maiden for his bride. 'But', he objected, 'she would never be able to creep into the hole in which I live.'

'As for that', replied the hermit, 'she was a mouse when I found her, and a mouse she shall be again.'

So saying, he turned the girl back into a mouse, and she crept down the hole to her husband. \\\

THE STUPID CAMEL

A CAMEL who had lost his way happened to come to the court of the King of beasts, the lion. It was the first time the lion had ever seen such a strange creature as the camel, with his long neck and the hump upon his back. He promised the camel that no one should do him any harm, and gave him food and drink, and asked him to stay at his court. So the camel became one of the lion's courtiers, and his master showed him great favour. This did not please the lion's ministers, the crow, the panther, and the jackal, who grew very jealous of the new-comer. They made up their minds to get rid of him, if possible.

One day the lion was wounded by a hunter's arrow and was forced to remain in his den. He was too weak to hunt for himself, so that he was soon short of food. The crow, the panther, and the jackal thought that their chance had come. They told their master that they were not swift or strong enough to catch the large animals that were his prey, but they could not let him starve.

'And so,' they said, 'there is only one thing to be done. We are sorry for it, but we can see no other way out. We must kill the camel! After all, he is a grass-eating animal, and we are flesh-eaters, who belong to a higher race. You are the King, and

he is only a stranger. If we kill him, there will be enough for us all.'

But the lion refused. 'No,' he said. When he came here I promised that he would be safe at my court. I cannot break my royal word. You must find some other means of getting me food.'

The crow, the panther, and the jackal went away to think of a fresh plan. At last a clever idea struck them. They all three went to the camel and said, 'You know that our master is ill and unable to hunt. He has had nothing to eat for a long time, and now he is very hungry. He is a kind master, and does not complain, but we can see how he suffers. We cannot let him die of hunger. We have made up our minds to offer him our own bodies. Of course, he will refuse; he would not think of killing his old friends, but he will be pleased with us. You shall have the same chance of winning his favour. Come with us and pretend that you are ready to give your life to save your master.'

The camel was easily deceived. He went with the others to see the King. The lion said that he could not dream of eating the crow, the panther, or the jackal; but when the camel made the same offer, the King felt that he was freed from his promise to protect him. So without more ado the lion fell upon the camel and killed him. He shared the body with the others, and they all ate their fill. Thus the camel paid a heavy price for his folly in trusting those who had reason to wish him harm.

THE CLEVER MOUSE

A TALL banyan tree once grew outside a great city. Four animals had made it their home—an owl, a cat, a mouse, and a mongoose. The mouse and the mongoose had their holes among the roots of the tree ; the cat lived in a hollow in the trunk ; and the owl perched anywhere among the branches. The owl, the mouse, and the mongoose were all afraid of the cat, as they were her natural prey. The mouse feared all the others for the same reason. Being a night-bird, the owl used to seek his food during the night ; and the mouse and the mongoose did the same in order to escape the cat. The cat, on the other hand, had no reason to dread any of the others, and could wander about by day or night as she pleased. They all used to hunt in a barley-field near the banyan tree.

One day a low-caste hunter saw the cat in this field and set a trap to catch her. She escaped several times, but at last she was caught while she was chasing the mouse. When the mouse saw that the cat was a prisoner, he began to dance for joy ; but his joy did not last long, for he soon found himself in danger from the owl and the mongoose. They were safe from the cat, and they thought that they now had a good chance of catching the mouse.

The mongoose made his way through the stalks of barley in search of him, while the owl flew to and fro over the field to see where he was hiding.

The mouse saw that he was in deadly peril, and did not know what to do to save his life. 'The owl and the mongoose dare not go too near the cat,' he thought. 'If I go away from her they will catch me. But if I go within reach of the cat, she may kill me with one stroke of her claws. There is only one thing to be done. I must offer to set the cat free, if she will promise to let me alone. I can gnaw through the strings of the trap and let the cat out; but not unless she gives me her word not to hunt me any more.'

So the mouse went up to the cat, and said, 'I am sorry for you and am ready to help you. We have been neighbours for a long time in the banyan tree, and I know you have many good points, though cats are the enemies of mice. All the same, I dare not set you free unless I am sure that you will do me no harm.'

The cat said, 'There is no need to fear me. I could not bring myself to hurt any one who had saved my life. Let me loose, and we shall be friends for ever.'

'You can prove to me that you mean what you say,' replied the mouse. 'The owl and the mongoose are looking for me. Let me creep between your paws, and they will not dare to touch me. But I

warn you that if you kill me when you have me near you, the others will do nothing to help you to escape. They will be only too glad to see the hunter make an end of you.'

So the cat held the mouse safe in her paws, and when the owl and the mungoose came up they were afraid to come too near her. Since the mouse seemed to be on such good terms with the cat, they thought that they would be wise to let him alone in future, and they went away.

Then the cat begged the mouse to gnaw through the strings of the trap which were holding her fast by the legs. Even now the mouse did not trust the cat; but he began to use his teeth on the strings, and made a great noise as though it was a hard task to cut them through. The cat kept on urging him to be quick, and he replied that he was doing his best. In this way he wasted the whole of the night, for he did not wish to let the cat out until the hunter came in the morning.

At length the pale light of the dawn crept over the sky. The hunter was seen coming across the field towards the trap. With a few quick bites the mouse cut through the last of the strings, and the cat escaped. She was in such a hurry to be out of the hunter's reach that she had no time to think about the mouse. She was out of sight in an instant, and the mouse made his way back home safe and sound.

Not long after the cat came to the mouse's hole



THE CAT HELD THE MOUSE SAFE IN HER PAWS

and called to him to come out and receive her thanks. But the mouse laughed and answered : ' No, no, my friend. I am not coming out while you are there. I do not trust you. It is true that you swore to be my friend, but you did not do it of your own free will. You saved my life, and I saved yours ; so we are quits. But we cannot be friends, for we are enemies by nature. We have helped each other, I know, but we did it for our own ends, and that does not make us friends. I thank you for what you did ; you have good cause to thank me. That is all. Good-bye !'

THE MONKEYS' FIRE

ONE winter's day a troop of monkeys were going through the forest looking for a place where they would not feel the bitter cold. They could do nothing but shiver, and their teeth chattered till they could hardly speak. They searched in vain for a long time, until one of them said, 'Well, we have plenty of wood, and we must do our best to make ourselves a fire.'

'That is all very well', said another, 'but how are we going to light it?'

Just then another monkey gave a joyful cry. 'Look! Look! Here is a spark, under this bush. Bring me some twigs, and we shall soon have a splendid fire.'

They all followed him and saw a little spot of bright light shining in a dark place among the bushes. The monkeys danced with delight and ran off to gather dead leaves and small sticks to pile round the spark. Others broke off large branches to put on the fire when it began to blaze. When the dry leaves and twigs had been placed round the spark, one of the monkeys began to blow on it gently to fan it into a flame.

But nothing happened. The little light went on glowing, but the dead leaves did not catch fire. The monkey blew harder and harder, and his friends came one by one to help him. Soon they were blowing

with all their might, and still the spark went on shining, but did not spread to the leaves. The monkeys could not tell what was wrong. While they were all still gathered round the spark, with hardly any breath left in them, a bird came and perched on a branch just above them. It watched them for a while and then said, in a tone of surprise, 'Excuse me, friends, but what are you trying to do there ?

'Can you not see?', replied a monkey. 'We are trying to blow this spark into a flame. We must have a fire, for we are nearly dead with cold.'

The bird was so amused that it almost fell off the branch. 'Do you mean to tell me that you think you can get a fire like that?' it said, with great scorn. 'Why, my poor friends that is only a poor little insect. You are wasting your breath on a fire-fly.'

'Well,' said another monkey, 'if it is a fire-fly, it ought to be able to give us fire. Besides, we can see its light with our own eyes.'

'Of course, you can,' answered the bird. 'But it is not the kind of light that gives out heat.'

'Oh, go away' cried all the monkeys. 'Mind your own business. We know a light when we see one.' And as some of them began to throw stones, the bird thought it had better leave them to their folly. So it took to its wings, and the monkeys went on blowing—until the fire-fly grew tired of lying in such a windy place and, to the great disgust of the monkeys, flew away out of their sight.

THE MONKEY AND THE PORPOISE

THERE was once a monkey named Valimukha who lived all alone in a forest of Udumba trees on the shore of the sea. One day he was sitting on a branch which hung out over the waves and eating one of the fruits of the Udumba tree. All of a sudden the fruit slipped from his grasp and fell into the sea. A porpoise swam up and ate it, and he liked the taste so much that he gave a cry of pleasure. This cry seemed to the monkey so sweet a sound that he wanted to hear it again, and he picked some more fruit and threw it down to the porpoise to make him utter it once more. By and by the porpoise had enough for that time. He thanked the monkey and said he would come back again next day. In this way the two became great friends. They spent as much time with each other as they could, the monkey sitting on the shore, and the porpoise near him in the shallow water,

This did not please the wife of the porpoise, for her husband left her alone all day while he talked with the monkey. At length she thought of a scheme to part the two friends, which would cost the life of the monkey. She pretended to be very ill indeed, but when her husband asked what was the matter with her, and what he could do to cure her, she said that she dared not tell him. The husband then went to his wife's friend and asked if she knew the cause of her illness. The friend had been told by the

wife what to say. She told the porpoise that his wife was very ill indeed, and only one thing could cure her. That was a soup made from the heart of a monkey.

The porpoise went away in a very sad state of mind. He knew only one monkey, and that monkey was his dearest friend. He could not bring himself to take his friend's life. At the same time he was bound to save his wife from death if he could. Thus love for his wife fought against love for his friend. In the end he had to face the fact that his first duty was to his sick wife; and he made up his mind to ask the monkey to visit him in his home in the waves, and there take his life.

Next time he saw the monkey he said to him, 'We have been friends for a long time, and I should like you to meet my wife. She has heard a great deal about you, and has told me to ask if you would come over and have a meal with us to-day. His friend was very willing to go, and the two set out together over the waves, the monkey riding on the porpoise's back. As they went along, the monkey saw that the porpoise had something on his mind. He was much more quiet than usual, and now and then he heaved a deep sigh. At last the monkey asked what was the cause of his trouble. The porpoise looked round and saw that they were a long way out to sea, too far for the monkey to swim back to the shore. He could keep the secret no longer, and he told the monkey, with every sign of grief, what was to be his fate.'

